

REMARKS

The Office Action dated September 30, 2004, has been received and reviewed.

Claims 1-23 are currently pending and under consideration in the above-referenced application, each standing rejected.

Reconsideration of the above-referenced application is respectfully requested.

Preliminary Amendment

Please note that a Preliminary Amendment was filed in the above-referenced application on March 4, 2004, but that the undersigned attorney has not yet received any acknowledgement that the Preliminary Amendment has been entered into the Office file for the above-referenced application. If, for some reason, the Preliminary Amendment has not yet been entered into the Office file, the undersigned attorney would be happy to provide the Office with a true copy thereof.

Obviousness-Type Double Patenting Rejections

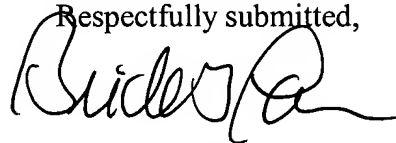
Claims 1-23 stand rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the subject matter recited in claims 1-20 of U.S. Patent 6,006,739 and over the subject matter to which claims 8-26 of U.S. Patent 6,196,096 are drawn.

Terminal disclaimers and the appropriate fees are being filed herewith, in compliance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.321(b) and (c), to obviate the obviousness-type double patenting rejections, thereby expediting prosecution of the above-referenced application and avoiding further expense and time delay. The filing of terminal disclaimers in the above-referenced application should not be construed as acquiescence of the propriety of the obviousness-type double patenting rejections.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that each of claims 1-23 is allowable. An early notice of the allowability of each of these claims is respectfully solicited, as is an indication that the above-referenced application has been passed for issuance. If any issues preventing allowance of the above-referenced application remain which might be resolved by way of a telephone conference, the Office is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brick G. Power", written over the typed name.

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